the subject for which it was designed. Are the students then of the School of Design thus taught? It appears not. They are taught to draw, but then what are they taught to draw? Are their faculties for the arts legitimately exercised, and rightly directed for the purposes of design? If their faculties are exercised upon art only, they are not. They must have their faculties exercised first upon the works of creation, and then a due studying of the works of the great designers may be turned to good account. But great care must be taken in placing such works of art before the students that are not incongruous—such as those senseless productions of half man and half beast, half man and half vegetables, and half man and half stone, with wooden cases to keep from view their lower extremities; all such deplorable absurdities should be turned to the right about, for they have outlived sensible people's likings. In point of true design, every thing is yet to be done. The authorities have been changing their masters, but the students feel they are not at all nearer design. A sound system of instruction must be propounded, or it will be vain to expect the students to become designers; in fact, they are made draughtsmen; and, it appears from their statements, nothing further. This nation should have the most perfect School of Design that is in its power to make, and no longer should it delay so important a subject. The faculties for the arts were given to be duly cultivated, and the legislature should employ its wisdom in carrying such cultivation into effect. If the legislature continues to sleep as it has done upon artistic education, this nation must rest content with being the mere imitators of her foreign neighbours.

I am, Sir, &c. GEO. R. LEWIS.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY.

AT the annual general meeting of this society, held on the 31st ultimo, the following report was read:—

"Your general committee have much pleasure in submitting the following summary of their proceedings during the past year.

Shortly after the last annual meeting, the committee addressed a letter to Sir Robert Peel, requesting to know if any progress had been made in the preparation of a map of the metropolis, founded on an ordnance survey, which had been promised to a deputation of this society in 1842, and urging the importance of such a map on various public grounds.

The committee also took that opportunity of expressing a hope that the important question of an embankment of the Thames, with a view both to the improved facilities of communication, as well as public health and recreation, would not be lost sight of during the then ensuing sessions of Parliament.

A letter was also addressed to the Secretary of her Majesty's Commissioners for Metropolitan Improvements, on the subject of the proposed line of thoroughfares, connecting the Belgrave-square district with Westminster Abbey and the New Houses of Parliament, strongly urging that good taste and public convenience should not be sacrified to a narrow economy; but that by some modification, a view of Westminster Abbey as one of the noblest monuments of antiquity might be preserved, and an approach to that, and the seat of the legislature, rendered worthy of the metropolis of the British nation.

In their last report the committee stated the steps which had been taken with regard to a modification of the window duties, or as they have been justly designated, taxes upon light and ventilation, in their effects, excluding multitudes of human beings from the light of the sun during a large portion of their existence, and compelling them to breathe pestilence. Your committee continuing to feel a revision of this tax essential to the sanatory existence and comfort of the community, as necessary also to avoid its resulting and injurious consequences in defective construction and architectural deformity; and, moreover, satisfied that an alteration might be effected with little or no sacrifice of revenue, resolved to persevere in such object. Mr. Hickson (who on this and many other occasions as the society have witnessed, has been most strenuous in his exertions), having prepared a paper on the subject, your committee resolved that a thousand copies of the same should be printed and circulated. Several petitions to Parliament on the same subject were also prepared and adopted, public meetings were promoted, and the committee have had much pleasure in recording their sense of the exertions of Viscount Duncan in this benevolent cause.

Notices having been published in the newspapers of an application to Parliament for stopping up the thoroughfare for carriages on the east side of Lincoln's-Inn Fields, your committee directed a letter to be addressed to the secretary of her Majesty's Commissioners for Metropolitan Improvements, urging the serious obstruction and public inconvenience that must ensue if such a project were effected, and referring the commissioners to the report of a committee of the House of Commons in 1838, with plans, approving of a direct carriage communication by that line between the Strand and Holborn; and which, from the evidence then submitted, it appeared would be effected at the inconsiderable outlay of 18,000*l*.

The committee represented, that there is at present no approach from the north of London to the Strand, between Endell-street, St. Giles's, and Holborn-bridge, except by courts, or narrow winding lanes; and that if the existing obstructions could not immediately be removed, at least any increase of them should be prevented by the influence of the honourable commissioners. Your committee have the gratification to state, that they shortly after received a reply from the commissioners, stating that the measure had been abandoned.

Your committee, viewing the subjects of the Westminster improvements and of the Thames embankment as of great national importance, have devoted much time and anxious consideration thereto.

With regard to the former, plans, embodying the suggestions of the society, with a bird's-eye view of Westminster Abbey as thereby isolated, have been submitted by the committee to her Majesty's commissioners, and having strongly urged and reiterated its importance, have subsequently had the pleasure to receive an assurance that it should receive their best attention. The committee have been enabled, through the liberality of Mr. Hickson, to prepare copies of the plan and view of Westminster Abbey, which will shortly be forwarded to every member of the society.

Modified plans of the Thames embankment, embracing the suggestions of various members of the society, have also been prepared with the view of being submitted to the commissioners. Subsequently, your honorary secretary, Mr. Henry Austin, has suggested a plan of a railway street, in continuation of the embankment, and by which a junction may be formed with the Blackwall railway, and by which means the improvement long since urged by the society to her Majesty's commissioners, may be effected; namely, that of a spacious street or roadway, adequate to the increased and increasing traffic between the western and eastern parts of the metropolis.

Your committee have the pleasure to state, that on these plans having been submitted to the directors of the Blackwall railway, they were highly approved, and readily adopted by them. A company is in course of formation to carry the same into effect; and with the further view of connecting the same with other railways, by which the present obstruction of the principal public streets will doubtless be much relieved.

The committee cannot but congratulate the members on the signal success which has hitherto attended the efforts of the society. Although their power is not great, and their means at present are small, it has become manifest that they may be rendered the nucleus of important benefits. The Government having so readily yielded to the representations and suggestions of the society in advising her Majesty to appoint a commission for metropolitan improvements, this society for a time remained passive, considering its province rather to watch the proceedings of that body, and to render from time to time such assistance in the way of suggestions, or otherwise, as might be in their power; but observing how little has hitherto been effected, and satisfied by a review of the past year how much may be done by zealous and persevering efforts, and encouraged by success, your committee would call on the society, jointly and individually, to future exertion; and to devise some efficient steps to render its existence more generally known, and extend its sphere of influence and usefulness.

As to the results of the past year, it may be stated—

That with regard to the important subject of the window duties, the minister has promised to consider the subject with a view to their repeal or modification.

That with respect to the modification of the Westminister new line or thoroughfare, and the isolation of Westminster Abbey, it is now earnestly hoped that means will be adopted to effect so manifest and important an improvement.

The proposed obstruction of the carriageway on the east side of Lincoln's-Inn Fields has been abandoned.

The smoke nuisance, which was long a source of much attention and consideration to the society, having been taken up by Mr. Mackinnon, a member of this society and of the legislature, has only been relinquished by him on the Government engaging to provide for its suppression in the general measure of sanatory regulations about to be submitted to Parliament.

That with regard to the highly important subject of the Thames embankment, and the improvements consequent thereon, which has occupied so much of the attention of your committee, there is now every reason to expect that they will be accomplished, and that without any sacrifice on the part of the Government or the country, and indirectly through the exertions of this society.

As there are many subjects of improvement, both sanatory and constructive, to which the attention of the society may be most advantageously directed, your committee would again earnestly impress the importance of individual exertion on the part of the members, to extend their numbers and influence, and thus to render their future efforts yet more conducive to public benefit." We gladly repeat this appeal, and express a hope that many of our readers will join a society which is calculated to do much good.

ART-UNION OF LONDON.

THE annual exhibition of the works of art purchased by the prizeholders will be opened to the subscribers and their friends, at the Suffolk-street Gallery, on Monday, the 18th inst. The Art-Union indemnity bill has received the royal assent. We are glad to learn that the committee of the House of Commons, who were appointed to take evidence on the subject of art-unions last session, are about to publish their report and the minutes of evidence. The committee of the Art-Union of London have commissioned Mr. Calder Marshall to execute in marble his group, "the first whisper of love," lately exhibited in the Royal Academy, for a prizeholder who had deputed the committee to select a work of art for him.

HOLBORN AND FINSBURY SEWERS.

TENDERS recently delivered for constructing a main line of sewer in Charlotte-street, Bedford-square, 3,573 feet in length:

Digge	£5,500
Cooper	4,505
Ward and Son	4,230
Johnson	4,190
Bethick, and R. Davis	3,878

For the branch drains and gullies:

Digge	£1,200
Cooper	850
Ward and Son	840
Johnson	800
Bethick and R. Davis	771

The mode of estimating which produces such results as this must be defective in the extreme.

OPERATIVES IN PARIS.—The journeymen carpenters of Paris still hold out. A meeting of the master builders has been held to receive delegates from the men, but the terms proposed by them were rejected by a majority of 167 votes to 7.

For fast, clean OCR and PDF Compression visit TheParanoidsOffice.com